

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 ANKARA 002023

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/07/2015

TAGS: PREL PTER TU

SUBJECT: GWOT ASSESSMENT: POST FEEDBACK

REF: ANKARA 005116

(U) Classified Secret by Ambassador Eric Edelman for E.O.  
12958 Reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

**¶11. (S/NF) Summary.** There is significant US-Turkish cooperation in the GWOT. Better coordination among Turkish intelligence and the various security services could improve Turkish leaders, understanding of the threat and effectiveness in cooperation with us. The Turkish National Police provides excellent protection for U.S. diplomatic and military facilities. The GOT's counterterror (CT) finance regime, however, lacks sufficient legal authority and is weak on enforcement. The CT finance regime would benefit from additional pressure from FATF, the relevant UN committees, and higher level USG engagement. The lack of visible U.S. action against the PKK/Kongra-Gel in Iraq has not yet had a significant negative impact on US-Turkish CT cooperation; but continued U.S. inaction could eventually lead to deterioration in the ability or willingness of Turkish officials to cooperate with the USG. End Summary.

-----  
SUCCESSES: STRONG US-TURKISH COOPERATION  
-----

**¶12. (S/NF)** We have good relations with and receive significant cooperation on antiterrorism from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Turkish National Police (TNP), the National Intelligence Organization (MIT), and other Turkish agencies. TNP provides excellent protection for U.S. diplomatic and military facilities throughout Turkey. In addition to sharing intelligence information on various groups operating in Turkey, the TNP and the MIT are conducting aggressive counterterrorist campaigns and have detained numerous suspected terrorists in scores of raids, disrupting these groups before terrorist acts could be carried out. TNP was extremely active and aggressive in monitoring and, in some cases, proactively detaining suspected terrorists prior to the June 2004 POTUS visit and NATO Summit in Istanbul. Interagency cooperation among Turkish services suffers from philosophical differences or turf battles, and a systemic weakness of analysis and coordination. The weak analysis causes Turkish services and politicians to underestimate the degree they are targets and the importance of transit and support networks for international terror. The Turks are also very reticent about sharing information on their own citizens.

**¶13. (U)** Turkey remains a good ally in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). Turkey agreed to assume command of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan for a second time. It will command ISAF VII from February to August 2005, contributing up to 1,600 troops. The US and Turkish militaries are also cooperating in the training of Georgian and Azerbaijani security forces.

**¶14. (U)** Turkey permits the transport to Iraq of humanitarian goods; contributes humanitarian goods and services; and sells vital material such as fuel, food, and water to U.S. forces in Iraq. They also allow the use of Incirlik Air Base for U.S. tankers to refuel aircraft on support missions for both Operational Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). The GOT also allowed Incirlik to be used for the outbound rotation of US troops returning from Iraq. Turkey, moreover, is active in Iraqi reconstruction efforts, including the provision of electricity and the training of Iraqi diplomats, as well as contributing to the NATO training mission for Iraqi security forces.

**¶15. (C)** Turkish officials provide excellent assistance regarding the VISA VIPER program. Every month the Embassy receives the names of about 200 suspected Turkish terrorists from the Turkish authorities. Most are domestic PKK/Kongra-Gel or leftist terrorists, but we have begun to see Al-Qaida affiliated suspects on these lists.

**¶16. (C)** The Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program has been very successful in providing training to our Turkish partners. Turkish officials are eager participants in ATA training programs and, according to reports we have received, Turks are among the best students in these classes.

-----

#### MISCELLANEOUS CHALLENGES

---

¶7. (S/NF) One impediment to greater cooperation with the GOT is the perception among Turkish leaders and the public that the USG is more focused on "their terrorists" (e.g. Al-Qaida and Hezbollah) than on Turkish concerns regarding "our terrorists" (e.g. DHKP-C and PKK/Kongra-Gel). Turkish security and intelligence officials tend to be more focused and cooperative on terrorism issues directly related to Turkish security concerns than on other terrorism problems. Since 9-11 and especially since the November 2003 Istanbul bombings, there has been greater understanding and cooperation from Turkish officials at the working level regarding the threat posed to Turkey by terrorists linked to Al-Qaida, but problems persist.

¶8. (S/NF) The Turks are not always transparent in their cooperation with the USG. Although the Turks are good at sharing information, they have been willing to engage in joint operations against counterterrorism targets sporadically, deciding to approach a target based on capabilities and requirements. The GOT responds to our requests, but sometimes significant periods of time may go by before we are informed about any progress on a specific counterterrorism issue.

¶9. (S/NF) Standards regarding the implementation of the Leahy Amendment as applied to State/INL law enforcement training funding continue to prevent some forms of useful cooperation. Because the GOT is unwilling to accept standard language in an agreement, funds for Turkey were cut. According to agencies here with regional responsibilities, other U.S. missions in the region have an easier time gaining access to training funds for security officials, despite Turkey's human rights record being equivalent or better.

---

#### THE TERROR FINANCE CHALLENGE

---

¶10. (SBU) In compliance with UN Security Resolution 1373, Turkey has ratified all United Nations conventions on combating terrorism. However, Turkey has acted (by Council of Ministers decrees) to freeze the assets only of those terrorist organizations, persons, and entities designated pursuant to UN Security Council resolution 1267 (relating to Taliban and Al-Qaida), because Turkish law does not currently permit it to freeze the assets of other such organizations, persons, and entities. Turkish efforts to seize the assets of those who fund terrorist organizations have been further hampered by limited political will, weak technical capacity and limited cooperation between agencies.

---

#### THE LONG TERM CHALLENGE: THE PKK ISSUE

---

¶11. (S/NF) The PKK/Kongra-Gel has stepped up its terror campaign in Turkey since revoking its "unilateral" ceasefire on 1 June 2004. Turkish policymakers remind us regularly that President Bush told their leaders during his June 2004 visit here that we remained committed to take action to prevent the PKK from continuing its safehaven in Iraq, and they are waiting impatiently. Our continued inaction against the PKK in Iraq, even non-military measures, especially as the organization steps up its attacks against this NATO ally, gives those who oppose our overall policy in the region a wedge issue in their effort to move Turkish policy away from a western orientation.

¶12. (S/NF) The lack of visible U.S. military or political action against the PKK/Kongra-Gel has also significantly contributed to the anti-American political environment in Turkey. Turkish newspapers and television programs are filled with conspiracy theories asserting that the U.S. is supporting the PKK; promoting an independent "Kurdistan" in northern Iraq (which, the theory goes, will inevitably expand to include southeast Turkey); and pursuing a foreign policy designed to weaken the Turkish Republic. Although we do not believe that the lack of U.S. action against PKK has negatively impacted US-Turkish CT cooperation so far, continued U.S. inaction could eventually lead to a significant deterioration in the ability or willingness of Turkish officials to cooperate with the U.S.

---

#### POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

---

¶13. (C) A number of steps could be taken to improve U.S.-Turkish cooperation in the GWOT. The GOT could use more assistance in acquiring technical equipment, including computers. The Turks would also benefit from training programs focused on computer networking, computer forensics,

and maritime security.

¶14. (C) With regards to the GOT's counterterror finance regime, the GOT's plans to criminalize terror finance; define terrorism in accordance with international standards; and streamline its financial intelligence unit, the Financial Crimes Investigative Board (MASAK), are important steps towards strengthening the regime. The USG, along with the FATF, Egmont, the UN, and the EU, should continue to look for ways to keep the pressure on the GOT to follow through with its proposed reforms.

¶15. (C) Furthermore, the USG should continue its long-standing engagement with the GOT with training in counterterror finance as well as pursue high level engagement on policy. Such engagement might be useful in order to raise the profile of this issue at senior levels of the GOT and give the bureaucrats, work a top-down push to speed up enactment of legal reforms.

¶16. (C) Another area that can be used as leverage is Turkey's upcoming review by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) at the end of 2005/beginning of 2006. The GOT is much more likely to take action if it is getting pressure from other sources, in addition to US pressure. MASAK seems to put great store in improving its image in FATF. US representatives to FATF could raise the issue and seek ways for FATF to engage with Turkey prior to the upcoming review. In addition, the GOT, especially the MFA, are sensitive to meeting their obligations to the UN. The US could look into the possibility of a visit by the 1373 or 1267 committee that could help focus the GOT's attention on this issue.

¶17. (C) Additionally, in Post's opinion, the GOT's weak anti-terrorist finance regime could benefit largely from more training in investigating and prosecuting financial crimes. The MASAK could benefit from more training on effective FIU operating procedures, including analytical training.

¶18. (S/NF) We also need to pursue specific nonmilitary steps (reftel) against the PKK that can both weaken this terrorist organization and prove to the Turks that we take our counterterrorism rhetoric and commitments seriously. For the present in Iraq, now that the Iraqi Transitional Government (ITG) is being formed we need to reinvigorate our trilateral process. The authorities in the Kurdistan Region, moreover, should be pressed to at a minimum shut down PKK/Kongra-Gel offices outside the mountains; act against the PKK's resupply, movement, and recruitment efforts; and prevent the expansion of PKK facilities near the Turkish border.

¶19. (C) Counterterrorism Security Group (CSG) efforts to intensify focus and cooperation against PKK/Konga-Gel logistics and capabilities outside Iraq would build the GOT's confidence in the USG's commitment against the PKK and weaken the terrorist organization by drying up its funding streams and disrupting its operations. The USG, moreover, should encourage a GOT-hosted or joint U.S.-GOT-hosted multilateral conference on European PKK activities. The PKK is involved in a number of criminal activities in Europe (including drug running and extortion), but the GOT has had only limited success in convincing European countries to close down PKK-connected media outlets, front parties, and fund-raising organizations. In many cases, the Turks lack the information needed to pursue a legal case against these PKK-connected groups in European courts. An anti-PKK conference would assist our NATO ally in its fight against the PKK; aid U.S. public diplomacy efforts in Turkey; and provide a forum to showcase U.S.-European-Turkish cooperation in the GWOT.

EDELMAN